







# EVANGELINE,

A

TALE OF ACADIE.

### HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.-1807-1882.

Evangeline is Longfellow's most perfect poem. A more delightful idyl has not been given to English verse than this exquisite creation. It is sufficient to assure its author an imperishable fame. Taking for its theme the tragedy of the life-long separation of two simple peasant lovers, consequent upon the forcible removal of a colony of French settlers from their quiet village of Grand Pré, Acadie (Nova Scotia), he sings such a song of much-enduring constancy as has rarely thrilled the harp of poet. The bride roams a continent over, never wearying in her tender search for the beloved, from the fatal hour of parting that was to have seen them wedded, till a Sister of Mercy, in old age, she finds her lover dying in a public hospital. There has never been written for the sympathy of the world a more affecting and faultless climax to the story of the womanly love "that hopes and endures and is patient," than the closing couplet:

Meekly she bowed her own and murmured, 'Father, I thank thee.'"

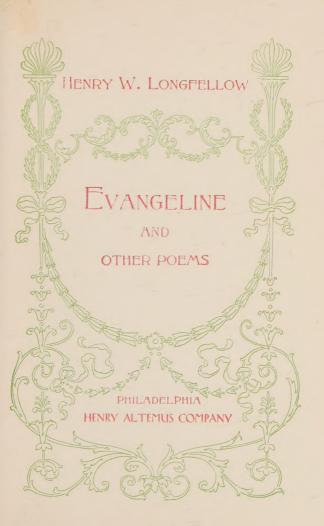
<sup>&</sup>quot;And as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,

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Frontispiece-Evangeline.

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# HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

# EVANGULINE AND

OTHER POEMS

PHILADELPHIA HENRY ALTENUS COMPANY



## EVANGELINE,

## A TALE OF ACADIE.

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring pines and the hemlocks,

Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight,

Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and prophetic,

Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms.

Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean

Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval; but where are the hearts that beneath it

Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the woodland the voice of the huntsman? Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home of Acadian farmers, —

Men whose lives glided on like rivers that water the woodlands,

Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting an image of heaven?

Waste are those pleasant farms, and the farmers forever departed!

Scattered like dust and leaves, when the mighty blasts of October

Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprinkle them far o'er the ocean.

Nought but tradition remains of the beautiful village of Grand-Pré.

Ye who believe in affection that hopes, and endures, and is patient,

Ye who believe in the beauty and strength of woman's devotion,

List to the mournful tradition still sung by the pines of the forest;

List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, home of the happy.

### PART THE FIRST.

Τ.

- In the Acadian land, on the shores of the Basin of Minas.
- Distant, secluded, still, the little village of Grand-Pré
- Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows stretched to the eastward,
- Giving the village its name, and pasture to flocks without number.
- Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had raised with labor incessant,
- Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated seasons the flood-gates
- Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at will o'er the meadows.
- West and south there were fields of flax, and orchards and cornfields
- Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain; and away to the northward
- Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft on the mountains
- Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from the mighty Atlantic

Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from their station descended.

There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the Acadian village.

Strongly built were the houses, with frames of oak and of hemlock,

Such as the peasants of Normandy built in the reign of the Henries.

Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-windows; and gables projecting

Over the basement below protected and shaded the doorway.

There in the tranquil evenings of summer, when brightly the sunset

Lighted the village street, and gilded the vanes on the chimneys,

Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps and in kirtles

Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs spinning the golden

Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy shuttles within doors

Mingled their sound with the whir of the whee:s and the songs of the maidens.

Solemnly down the street came the parish priest, and the children

Paused in their play to kiss the hand he extended to bless them.

Reverend walked he among them; and up rose matrons and maidens,

- Hailing his slow approach with words of affectionate welcome.
- Then came the laborers home from the field, and serenely the sun sank
- Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed. Anon from the belfry
- Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the roofs of the village
- Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of incense ascending,
- Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of peace and contentment.
- Thus dwelt together in love these simple Acadian farmers. —
- Dwelt in the love of God and of man. Alike were they free from
- Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy, the vice of republics.
- Neither locks had they to their doors, nor bars to their windows;
- But their dwellings were open as day and the hearts of the owners;
- There the richest was poor, and the poorest lived in abundance.
  - Somewhat apart from the village, and nearer the Basin of Minas,
- Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer of Grand-Pré,

Dwelt on his goodly acres; and with him, directing his household,

Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the pride of the village.

Stalworth and stately in form was the man of seventy winters;

Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is covered with snow-flakes;

White as the snow were his locks, and his cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.

Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seventeen summers.

Black were her eyes as the berry that grows on the thorn by the wayside,

Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath the brown shade of her tresses!

Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine that feed in the meadows,

When in the harvest heat she bore to the reapers at noontide

Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah! fair in sooth was the maiden.

Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while the bell from its turret

Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the priest with his hyssop

Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters blessings upon them,

Down the long street she passed, with her chaplet of beads and her missal,

- Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-rings,
- Brought in the olden time from France, and since, as an heirloom,
- Handed down from mother to child, through long generations.
- But a celestial brightness a more ethereal beauty —
- Shone on her face and encircled her form, when, after confession,
- Homeward serenely she walked with God's benediction upon her.
- When she had passed, it seemed like the ceasing of exquisite music.
  - Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the house of the farmer
- Stood on the side of a hill commanding the sea; and a shady
- Sycamore grew by the door, with a woodbine wreathing around it.
- Rudely carved was the porch, with seats beneath; and a footpath
- Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.
- Under the sycamore-tree were hives overhung by a penthouse,
- Such as the traveller sees in regions remote by the roadside,

Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary.

Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown

Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horses.

Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns and the farm-yard,

There stood the broad-wheeled wains and the antique ploughs and the harrows;

There were the folds for the sheep; and there, in his feathered seraglio,

Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the self-same

Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter.

Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves a village. In each one

Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch; and a staircase,

Under the sheltering eves, led up to the odorous corn-loft.

There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek and innocent inmates

Murmuring ever of love; while above in the variant breezes

Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world, the farmer of Grand-Pré

Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline governed his household.

Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and opened his missal,

Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his deepest devotion;

Happy was he who might touch her hand or the hem of her garment!

Many a suitor came to her door, by the darkness befriended,

And, as he knocked and waited to hear the sound of her footsteps,

Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or the knocker of iron;

Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint of the village,

Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the dance as he whispered

Hurried words of love, that seemed a part of the music.

But, among all who came, young Gabriel only was welcome;

Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the blacksmith,

Who was a mighty man in the village, and honored of all men;

For, since the birth of time, throughout all ages and nations,

Has the craft of the smith been held in repute by the people.

Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children from earliest childhood

Grew up together as brother and sister; and Father Felician,

Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had taught them their letters

Out of the self-same book, with the hymns of the church and the plain-song.

But when the hymn was sung, and the daily lesson completed,

Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of Basil the blacksmith.

There at the door they stood, with wondering eyes to behold him

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse as a plaything,

Nailing the shoe in its place; while near him the tire of the cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled round in a circle of cinders.

Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the gathering darkness

Bursting with light seemed the smithy, through every cranny and crevice,

Warm by the forge within they watched the laboring bellows,

And as its panting ceased, and the sparks expired in the ashes,

- Merrily laughed, and said they were nuns going into the chapel.
- Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the swoop of the eagle,
- Down the hillside bounding, they glided away o'er the meadow,
- Of in the barns they climbed to the populous nests on the rafters.
- Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone, which the swallow
- Brings from the shore of the sea to restore the sight of its fledglings;
- Lucky was he who found that stone in the nest of the swallow!
- Thus passed a few swift years, and they no longer were children.
- He was a valiant youth, and his face, like the face of the morning,
- Gladdened the earth with its light, and ripened thought into action.
- She was a woman now, with the heart and hopes of a woman.
- "Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called; for that was the sunshine
- Which, as the farmers believed, would load their orchards with apples;
- She, too, would bring to her husband's house delight and abundance,
- Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of children.

- Now had the season returned, when the nights grow colder and longer,
- And the retreating sun the sign of the Scorpion enters.
- Birds of passage sailed through the leaden air from the ice-bound,
- Desolate northern bays to the shores of tropical islands.
- Harvests were gathered in; and wild with the winds of September
- Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of old with the angel.
- All the signs foretold a winter long and inclement.
- Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had hoarded their honey
- Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian hunters asserted
- Cold would the winter be, for thick was the fur of the foxes.
- Such was the advent of autumn. Then followed that beautiful season,
- Called by the pious Acadian peasants the Summer of All-Saints!
- Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical light; and the landscape

- Lay as if new created in all the freshness of childhood.
- Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the restless heart of the ocean
- Was for a moment consoled. All sounds were in harmony blended.
- Voices of children at play, the crowing of cocks in the farm-yards,
- Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the cooing of pigeons,
- All were subdued and low as the murmurs of love, and the great sun
- Looked with the eye of love through the golden vapors around him;
- While arrayed in its robes of russet and scarlet and yellow,
- Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glittering tree of the forest
- Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian adorned with mantles and jewels.
  - Now recommenced the reign of rest and affection and stillness.
- Day with its burden and heat had departed, and twilight descending
- Brought back the evening star to the sky, and the herds to the homestead.
- Pawing the ground they came, and resting their necks on each other,

/.nd with their nostrils distended inhaling the freshness of evening.

Foremost bearing the bell, Evangeline's beautiful heifer,

Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon that waved from her collar.

Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of human affection.

Then came the shepherd back with his bleating flocks from the seaside,

Where was their favorite pasture. Behind them followed the watch-dog,

Patient, full of importance, and grand in the pride of his instinct,

Walking from side to side with a lordly air, and superbly

Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward the stragglers;

Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd slept; their protector,

When from the forest at night, through the starry silence, the wolves howled.

Late, with the rising moon, returned the wains from the marshes,

Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with its odor.

Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on their manes and their fetlocks,

While aloft on their shoulders the wooden and ponderous saddles,

- Painted with brilliant dves, and adorned with tassels of crimson,
- Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks heavy with blossoms.
- Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and yielded their udders
- Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and in regular cadence
- Into the sounding pails the foaming streamlets descended.
- Lowing of cattle and peals of laughter were heard in the farm-yard,
- Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank into stillness:
- Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the valves of the barn-doors.
- Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season was silent.
  - In-doors, warm by the wide-mouthed fireplace, idly the farmer
- Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the flames and the smoke-wreaths
- Struggled together like foes in a burning city. Behind him.
- Nodding and mocking along the wall, with gestures fantastic.
- Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished away into darkness.

Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back of his arm-chair

Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter plates on the dresser

Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of armies the sunshine.

Fragments of song the old man sang, and carols of Christmas,

Such as at home, in the olden time, his fathers before him

Sang in their Norman orchards and bright Burgundian vineyards.

Close at her father's side was the gentle Evangeline seated,

Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the corner behind her.

Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was its diligent shuttle,

While the monotonous drone of the wheel, like the drone of a bagpipe,

Followed the old man's song, and united the fragments together.

As in a church, when the chant of the choir at intervals ceases,

Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of the priest at the altar,

So, in each pause of the song, with measured motion the clock clicked.

.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps heard, and, suddenly lifted,

Sounded the wooden latch, and the door swung back on its hinges.

Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it was Basil the blacksmith,

And by her beating heart Evangeline knew who was with him.

"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed, as their footsteps paused on the threshold,

"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take thy place on the settle

Close by the chimney-side, which is always empty without thee;

Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and the box of tobacco:

Never so much thyself art thou as when through the curling

Smoke of the pipe or the forge thy friendly and jovial face gleams

Round and red as the harvest moon through the mist of the marshes."

Then, with a smile of content, thus answered Basil the blacksmith,

Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by the fireside:—

"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy jest and thy ballad!

Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when others are filled with

Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin before them.

Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst picked up a horseshoe."

Pausing a moment, to take the pipe that Evangeline brought him,

And with a coal from the embers had lighted, he slowly continued:—

"Four days now are passed since the English ships at their anchors

Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their cannon pointed against us.

What their design may be is unknown; but all are commanded

On the morrow to meet in the church, where his Majesty's mandate

Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas!

Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the people."

Then made answer the farmer: — "Perhaps some friendlier purpose

Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps the harvests in England

By untimely rains or untimelier heat have been blighted,

And from our bursting barns they would feed their cattle and children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village," said, warmly, the blacksmith,

- Shaking his head, as in doubt; then, heaving a sigh, he continued:—
- "Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour, nor Port Royal.
- Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk on its outskirts,
- Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate of to-morrow.
- Arms have been taken from us, and warlike weapons of all kinds;
- Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge and the scythe of the mower."
- Then with a pleasant smile made answer the jovial farmer:—
- "Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our flocks and our cornfields,
- Safer within these peaceful dikes, besieged by the ocean,
- Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the enemy's cannon.
- Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may no shadow of sorrow
- Fall on this house and hearth; for this is the night of the contract.
- Built are the house and the barn. The merry lads of the village
- Strongly have built them and well; and, breaking the glebe round about them,
- Filled the barn with hay, and the house with food for a twelvemonth.

René Leblanc will be here anon, with his papers and inkhorn.

Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the joy of our children?"

As apart by the window she stood, with her hand in her lover's.

Blushing Evangeline heard the words that her father had spoken,

And, as they died on his lips, the worthy notary entered.

#### III.

BENT like a laboring oar, that toils in the surf of the ocean,

Bent, but not broken, by age was the form of the notary public;

Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of the maize, hung

Over his shoulders; his forehead was high; and glasses with horn bows

Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom supernal.

Father of twenty children was he, and more than a hundred

C'ildren's children rode on his knee, and heard his great watch tick.

Four long years in the times of the war had he languished a captive,

- Suffering much in an old French fort as the friend of the English.
- Now, though warier grown, without all guile or suspicion,
- Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and simple, and childlike.
- He was beloved by all, and most of all by the children;
- For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in the forest,
- And of the goblin that came in the night to water the horses,
- And of the white Létiche, the ghost of a child who unchristened
- Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the chambers of children;
- And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked in the stable,
- And how the fever was cured by a spider shut up in a nutshell,
- And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved clover and horseshoes,
- With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of the village.
- Then up rose from his seat by the fireside Basil the blacksmith,
- Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly extending his right hand,
- "Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast heard the talk in the village,

And, perchance, canst tell us some news of these ships and their errand."

Then with modest demeanor made answer the notary public, —

"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet am never the wiser;

And what their errand may be I know not better than others.

Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil intention

Brings them here, for we are at peace; and why then molest us?"

"God's name!" shouted the hasty and somewhat irascible blacksmith;

"Must we in all things look for the how, and the why, and the wherefore?

Daily injustice is done, and might is the right of the strongest!"

But, without heeding his warmth, continued the notary public, —

"Man is unjust, but God is just; and finally justice

Triumphs; and well I remember a story, that often consoled me,

When as a captive I lay in the old French fort at Port Royal."

This was the old man's favorite tale, and he loved to repeat it

When his neighbors complained that any injustice was done them.

- 'Once in an ancient city, whose name I no longer remember,
- Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of Justice
- Stood in the public square, upholding the scales in its left hand,
- And n its right a sword, as an emblem that justice presided
- Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and homes of the people.
- Even the birds had built their nests in the scales of the balance.
- Having no fear of the sword that flashed in the sunshine above them.
- But in the course of time the laws of the land were corrupted;
- Might took the place of right, and the weak were oppressed, and the mighty
- Ruled with an iron red. Then it chanced in a nobleman's palace
- That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere long a suspicion
- Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in the household.
- She, after form of trial condemned to die on the scaffold.
- Patiently met her doom at the foot of the statue of Justice.
- As to her Father in heaven her innocent spirit ascended,

Lo! o'er the city a tempest rose; and the bolts of the thunder

Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in wrath from its left hand

Down on the pavement below the clattering scales of the balance,

And in the hollow thereof was found the nest of a magpie,

Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of pearls

Silenced, but not convinced, when the story was ended, the blacksmith

Stood like a man who fain would speak, but findeth no language;

All his thoughts were congealed into lines on his face, as the vapors

Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp on the table,

Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard with home-brewed

Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength in the village of Grand-Pré;

While from his pocket the notary drew his papers and inkhorn,

Wrote with a steady hand the date and the age of the parties,

- Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of sheep and in cattle.
- Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and well were completed,
- And the great seal of the law was set like a sun on the margin.
- Then from his leathern pouch the farmer threw on the table
- Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces of silver;
- And the notary rising, and blessing the bridand the bridegroom,
- Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to their welfare.
- Wiping the foam from his lip, he solemnly bowed and departed,
- While in silence the others sat and mused by the fireside,
- Till Evangeline brought the draught-board out of its corner.
- Soon was the game begun. In friendly contention the old men
- Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful manœuvre,
- Laughed when a man was crowned, or a breach was made in the king-row.
- Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a window's embrasure,
- Sat the lovers, and whispered together, beholding the moon rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of the meadows.

Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows of heaven,

Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the bell from the belfry

Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew, and straightway

Rose the guests and departed; and silence reigned in the household.

Many a farewell word and sweet good-night on the door-step

Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and filled it with gladness.

Carefully then were covered the embers that glowed on the hearth-stone,

And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread of the farmer.

Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evangeline followed.

Up the staircase moved a luminous space in the darkness,

Lighted less by the lamp than the shining face of the maiden.

Silent she passed through the hall, and entered the door of her chamber.

- Simple that chamber was, with its curtains of white, and its clothes-press
- Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves were carefully folded
- Linen and woollen stuffs, by the hand of Evangeline woven.
- This was the precious dower she would bring to her husband in marriage,
- Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of her skill as a housewife.
- Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mellow and radiant moonlight
- Streamed through the windows, and lighted the room, till the heart of the maiden
- Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremulous tides of the ocean.
- Ah! she was fair, exceeding fair to behold, as she stood with
- Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor of her chamber!
- Little she dreamed that below, among the trees of the orchard,
- Waited her lover and watched for the gleam of her lamp and her shadow.
- Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a feeling of sadness
- Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of clouds in the moonlight
- Flitted across the floor and darkened the room for a moment.

And, as she gazed from the window, she saw serenely the moon pass

Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star follow her footsteps,

As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wandered with Hagar!

## IV.

PLEASANTLY rose next morn the sun on the village of Grand-Pré.

Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the Basin of Minas,

Where the ships, with their wavering shadows, were riding at anchor.

Life had long been astir in the village, and clamorous labor

Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden gates of the morning.

Now from the country around, from the farms and neighboring hamlets,

Came in their holiday dresses the blithe Acadian peasants.

Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh from the young folk

Made the bright air brighter, as up from the numerous meadows,

Where no path could be seen but the track of wheels in the greensward,

Group after group appeared, and joined, or passed on the highway.

Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of labor were silenced.

Thronged were the streets with people; and noisy groups at the house-doors

Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and gossiped together.

Every house was an inn, where all were welcomed and feasted;

For with this simple people, who lived like brothers together,

All things were held in common, and what one had was another's.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed more abundant:

For Evangeline stood among the guests of her father;

Bright was her face with smiles, and words of welcome and gladness

Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of the orchard,

Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the feast of betrothal.

There in the shade of the porch were the priest and the notary seated;

- There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil the blacksmith.
- Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-press and the bee-hives,
- Michael the fiddler was placed, with the gayest of hearts and of waistcoats.
- Shadow and light from the leaves alternately played on his snow-white
- Hair, as it waved in the wind; and the jolly face of the fiddler
- Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are blown from the embers.
- Gayly the old man sang to the vibrant sound of his fiddle,
- Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres, and Le Carillon de Dunkerque,
- And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to the music.
- Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the dizzying dances
- Under the orchard-trees and down the path to the meadows;
- Old folk and young together, and children mingled among them.
- Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline, Benedict's daughter!
- Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of the blacksmith!

- So passed the morning away. And lo! with a summons sonorous
- Sounded the bell from its tower, and over the meadows a drum beat.
- Thronged erelong was the church with men. Without, in the churchyard,
- Waited the women. They stood by the graves, and hung on the headstones
- Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens fresh from the forest.
- Then came the guard from the ships, and marching proudly among them
- Entered the sacred portal. With loud and dissonant clangor
- Echoed the sound of their brazen drums from ceiling and casement,—
- Echoed a moment only, and slowly the ponderous portal
- Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the will of the soldiers.
- Then uprose their commander, and spake from the steps of the altar,
- Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the royal commission.
- "You are convened this day," he said, "by his Majesty's orders.
- Clement and kind has he been; but how you have answered his kindness,
- Let your own hearts reply! To my natural make and my temper

Painful the task is I do, which to you I know must be grievous.

Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the will of our monarch;

Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings, and cattle of all kinds

Forfeited be to the crown; and that you yourselves from this province

Be transported to other lands. God grant you may dwell there

Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peaceable people!

Prisoners now I declare you; for such is his Majesty's pleasure!"

As, when the air is serene in the sultry solstice of summer,

Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly sling of the hailstones

Beats down the farmer's corn in the field and shatters his windows,

Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground with thatch from the house-roofs,

Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break their enclosures;

So on the hearts of the people descended the words of the speaker.

Silent a moment they stood in speechless wonder, and then rose

Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and anger.

- And, by one impulse moved, they madly rushed to the door-way.
- Vain was the hope of escape; and cries and fierce imprecations
- Rang through the house of prayer; and high o'er the heads of the others
- Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of Basil the blacksmith.
- As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the billows.
- Flushed was his face and distorted with passion; and wildly he shouted,—
- "Down with the tyrants of England! we never have sworn them allegiance!
- Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on our homes and our harvests!"
- More he fain would have said, but the merciless hand of a soldier
- Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged him down to the pavement.
  - In the midst of the strife and tumult of angry contention,
- Lo! the door of the chancel opened, and Father Felician
- Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the steps of the altar.
- Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he awed into silence

All that clamorous throng; and thus he spake to his people;

Deep were his tones and solemn; in accents measured and mournful

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, distinctly the clock strikes.

"What is this that ye do, my children? what madness has seized you?

Forty years of my life have I labored among you, and taught you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one another!

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and prayers and privations?

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of love and forgiveness?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and would you profane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflowing with hatred?

Lo! where the crucified Christ from his cross is gazing upon you!

See! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness and holy compassion!

Hark! how those lips still repeat the prayer, 'O Father, forgive them!'

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when the wicked assail us,

Let us repeat it now, and say, 'O Father, forgive them!'" Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in the hearts of his people

Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded the passionate outbreak,

While they repeated his prayer, and said, "O Father, forgive them!"

Then came the evening service. The tapers gleamed from the altar.

Fervent and deep was x, e voice of the priest, and the people responded,

Not with their lips alone, but their hearts; and the Ave Maria

Sang they, and fell on their knews, and their souls, with devotion translated,

Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah ascending to heaven.

Meanwhile had spread in the village the tidings of ill, and on all sides

Wandered, wailing, from house to house the women and children.

Long at her father's door Evangeline stood with her right hand

Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the sun, that, descending,

Lighted the viliage street with mysterious splendor, and roofed each

Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and emblazoned its windows. Long within had been spread the snow-white cloth on the table;

There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey fragrant with wild-flowers;

There stood the tankard of ale, and the cheese fresh brought from the dairy;

And, at the head of the board, the great armchair of the farmer.

Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's door, as the sunset

Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the broad ambrosial meadows.

Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow had fallen,

And from the fields of her soul a fragrance celestial ascended, —

Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and forgiveness, and patience!

Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered into the village,

Cheering with looks and words the mournful hearts of the women,

As o'er the darkening fields with lingering steps they departed,

Urged by their household cares, and the weary feet of their children.

Down sank the great red sun, and in golden, glimmering vapors

Veiled the light of his face, like a Prophet descending from Sinai.

Sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom, by the church Evangeline lingered.

All was silent within; and in vain at the door and the windows

Stood she, and listened and looked, till, overcome by emotion,

"Gabriel!" cried she aloud with tremulous voice; but no answer

Came from the graves of the dead, nor the gloomier grave of the living.

Slowly at length she returned to the tenantless house of her father.

Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the board was the supper untasted,

Empty and drear was each room, and haunted with phantoms of terror.

Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the floor of her chamber.

In the dead of the night she heard the disconsolate rain fall

Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamoretree by the window.

Keenly the lightning flashed; and the voice of the echoing thunder

Told her that God was in heaven, and governed the world he created:

Then she remembered the tale she had heard of the justice of Heaven;

Soothed was her troubled soul, and she peacefully slumbered till morning.

## V.

Four times the sun had risen and set; and now on the fifth day

Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping maids of the farm-house.

Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and mournful procession,

Came from the neighboring hamlets and farms the Acadian women,

D.iving in ponderous wains their household goods to the sea-shore,

Pausing and looking back to gaze once more on their dwellings,

Ere they were shut from sight by the winding road and the woodland.

Close at their sides their children ran, and urged on the oxen,

While in their little hands they clasped some fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hurried; and there on the sea-beach Piled in confusion lay the household goods of the peasants.

All day long between the shore and the ships did the boats ply;

All day long the wains came laboring down from the village.

Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near to his setting,

Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of drums from the churchyard.

Thither the women and children thronged. On a sudden the church-doors

Opened, and forth came the guard, and marching in gloomy procession

Followed the long-imprisoned, but patient, Acadian farmers.

Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from their homes and their country,

Sing as they go, and in singing forget they are weary and wayworn,

So with songs on their lips the Acadian peasants descended

Down from the church to the shore, amid their wives and their daughters.

Foremost the young men came; and, raising together their voices,

Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the Catholic Missions:—

"Sacred heart of the Saviour! O inexhaustible fountain!

Fill our hearts this day with strength and submission and patience!"

Then the old men, as they marched, and the women that stood by the wayside

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in the sunshine above them

Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline waited in silence,

Not overcome with grief, but strong in the hour of affliction, —

Calmly and sadly she waited, until the procession approached her,

And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with emotion.

Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly running to meet him.

Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on his shoulder, and whispered,—

"Gabriel! be of good cheer! for if we love one another

Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever mischances may happen!"

Smiling she spake these words; then suddenly paused, for her father

Saw she slowly advancing. Alas! how changed was his aspect!

Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the fire from his eye, and his footstep

Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy heart in his bosom.

But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his neck and embraced him,

Speaking words of endearment where words of comfort availed not.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on that mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult and stir of embarking.

Busily plied the freighted boats; and in the confusion

Wives were torn from their husbands, and mothers, too late, saw their children

Left on the land, extending their arms, with wildest entreaties.

So unto separate ships were Basil and Gabriel carried.

While in despair on the shore Evangeline stood with her father.

Half the task was not done when the sun went down, and the twilight

Deepened and darkened around; and in haste the refluent ocean

Fled away from the shore, and left the line of the sand-beach

Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp and the slippery sea-weed.

Farther back in the midst of the household goods and the wagons,

Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a battle, All escape cut off by the sea, and the sentinels near them,

Lay encamped for the night the bouseless Acadian farmers.

Back to its nethermost caves retreated the bellowing ocean,

Dragging adown the beach the rattling pebbles, and leaving

Inland and far up the shore the stranded boats of the sailors.

Then, as the night descended, the herds returned from their pastures;

Sweet was the moist still air with the odor of milk from their udders;

Lowing they waited, and long, at the well-known bars of the farm-yard, —

Waited and looked in vain for the voice and the hand of the milkmaid,

Silence reigned in the streets; from the church no Angelus sounded,

Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed no lights from the windows.

But on the shores meanwhile the evening fires had been kindled,

Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands from wrecks in the tempest.

Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful faces were gathered,

Voices of women were heard, and of men, and the crying of children.

Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to hearth in his parish,

Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and blessing and cheering,

Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's desolate sea-shore.

Thus he approached the place where Evangeline sat with her father,

And in the flickering light beheld the face of the old man,

Haggard and hollow and wan, and without either thought or emotion,

E'en as the face of a clock from which the hands have been taken.

Vainly Evangeline strove with words and caresses to cheer him,

Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not, he looked not, he spake not,

But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the flickering fire-light.

"Benedicite!" murmured the priest, in tones of compassion.

More he fain would have said, but his heart was full, and his accents

Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet of a child on a threshold,

Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the awful presence of sorrow.

Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the head of the maiden,

Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars that above them

Moved on their way, unperturbed by the wrongs and sorrows of mortals.

Then sat he down at her side, and they wept together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in autumn the blood-red

Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and o'er the horizon

Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon mountain and meadow,

Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling huge shadows together.

Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the roofs of the village,

Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the ships that lay in the roadstead.

Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes of flame were

Thrust through their folds and withdrawn, like the quivering hands of a martyr.

- Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the burning thatch, and, uplifting,
- Whirled them aloft through the air, at once from a hundred house-tops
- Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of flame intermingled.
- These things beheld in dismay the crowd on the shore and on shipboard.
- Speechless at first they stood, then cried aloud in their anguish,
- "We shall behold no more our homes in the village of Grand-Pré!"
- Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow is the farm-yards,
- Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the lowing of cattle
- Came on the evening breeze, by the barking of dogs interrupted.
- Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles the sleeping encampments
- Far in the western prairies or forests that skirt the Nebraska,
- When the wild horses affrighted sweep by with the speed of the whirlwind,
- Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush to the river.
- Such was the sound that arose on the night, as the herds and the horses
- Broke through their folds and fences, and madly rushed o'er the meadows

Overwhelmed with the sight, yet speechless, the priest and the maiden

Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened and widened before them;

And as they turned at length to speak to their silent companion,

Lo! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched abroad on the sea-shore

Motionless lay his form, from which the soul had departed.

Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head, and the maiden

Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud in her terror.

Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her head on his bosom.

Through the long night she lay in deep, oblivious slumber;

And when she woke from the trance, she behelo a multitude near her.

Faces of friends she beheld, that were mournfully gazing upon her,

Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of saddest compassion.

Still the blaze of the burning village illumined the landscape,

Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on the faces around her,

And like the day of doom it seemed to her wavering senses.

Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to the people, —

"Let us bury him here by the sea. When a happier season

Brings us again to our homes from the unknown land of our exile,

Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in the churchyard."

Such were the words of the priest. And there in haste by the sea-side,

Having the glare of the burning village for funeral torches,

But without bell or book, they buried the farmer of Grand-Pré.

And as the voice of the priest repeated the service of sorrow,

Lo! with a mournful sound, like the voice of a vast congregation,

Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its roar with the dirges.

'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the waste of the ocean,

With the first dawn of the day, came heaving and hurrying landward.

Then recommenced once more the stir and noise of embarking;

And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed out of the harbor,

Leaving behind them the dead on the shore, and the village in ruins.

## PART THE SECOND.

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- MANY a weary year had passed since the burning of Grand-Pré,
- When on the falling tide the freighted vessels departed,
- Bearing a nation, with all its household gods, into exile.
- Exile without an end, and without an example in story.
- Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians landed:
- Scattered were they, like flakes of snow, when the wind from the northeast
- Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken the Banks of Newfoundland.
- Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wandered from city to city,
- From the cold lakes of the North to sultry Southern savannas,—
- From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands where the Father of Waters
- Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them down to the ocean,

- Deep in their sands to bury the scattered bones of the mammoth.
- Friends they sought and homes; and many, despairing, heart-broken,
- Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer a friend nor a fireside.
- Written their history stands on tablets of stone in the churchyards.
- Long among them was seen a maiden who waited and wandered.
- Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently suffering all things.
- Fair was she and young: but, alas! before her extended.
- Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life, with its pathway
- Marked by the graves of those who had sorrowed and suffered before her.
- Passions longextinguished, and hopes long dead and abandoned,
- As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by
- Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the sunshine.
- Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished;
- As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine,
- Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended

Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever within her,

Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the spirit,

She would commence again her endless search and endeavor:

Sometimes in churchyards strayed, and gazed on the crosses and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,

Came with its airy hand to point and beckon her forward.

Sometimes she spake with those who had seen her beloved and known him,

But it was long ago, in some far-off place or forgotten.

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" they said; "O yes! we have seen him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both have gone to the prairies;

Coureurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunters and trappers."

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said others; "O yes! we have seen him.

- He is a Voyageur in the lowlands of Louisiana."
- Then would they say, "Dear child! why dream and wait for him longer?
- Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel? others
- Who have hearts as tender and true, and spirits as Ioval?
- Here is Fartiste Leblanc, the notary's son, who has loved thee
- Many a tedious year; come, give him thy hand and be happy!
- Thou art too fair to be left to braid St. Catherine's tresses."
- Then would Evangeline answer, screnely but sadly, "I cannot!
- Whither my heart has gone, there follows my hand, and not elsewhere.
- For when the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway,
- Many things are made clear, that else lie hidden in darkness."
- Thereupon the priest, her friend and fatherconfessor.
- Said, with a smile, "O daughter! thy God thus speaketh within thee!
- Ta'k not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted:
- If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning

Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment;

That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.

Patience; accomplish thy labor; accomplish thy work of affection!

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is godlike.

Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till the heart is made godlike,

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and rendered more worthy of heaven!"

Cheered by the good man's words, Evangeline labored and waited.

Still in her heart she heard the funeral dirge of the ocean,

But with its sound there was mingled a voice that whispered, "Despair not!"

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and cheerless discomfort,

Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and thorns of existence.

Let me essay, O Muse! to follow the wanderer's footsteps;—

Not through each devious path, each changeful year of existence;

But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course through the valley:

Far from its margin at times, and seeing the gleam of its water

Here and there, in some open space, and at intervals only;

Then drawing nearer its banks, through sylvan glooms that conceal it,

Though he behold it not, he can hear its continuous murmur:

Huppy, at length, if he find the spot where it reaches an outlet.

## II.

It was the month of May. Far down the Beautiful River.

Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of the Wabash,

Into the golden stream of the broad and swift Mississippi,

Floated a cumbrous boat, that was rowed by Acadian boatmen.

It was a band of exiles; a raft, as it were, from the shipwrecked

Nation, scattered along the coast, now floating together,

Bound by the bonds of a common belief and a common misfortune:

Men and women and children, who, guided by hope or by hearsay,

Sought for their kith and their kin among the few-acred farmers

On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair Opelousas.

With them Evangeline went, and her guide, the Father Felician.

Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilderness sombre with forests,

Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river:

Night after night, by their blazing fires, encamped on its borders.

Now through rushing chutes, among green islands, where plumelike

Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests, they swept with the current,

Then emerged into broad lagoons, where silvery sand-bars

Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling waves of their margin,

Shining with snow-white plumes, large flocks of pelicans waded.

Level the landscape grew, and along the shores of the river,

Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuriant gardens,

Stood the houses of planters, with negro-cabins and dove-cots.

They were approaching the region where reigns perpetual summer,

Where through the Golden Coast, and groves of orange and citron,

Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to the eastward.

They, too, swerred from their course; and, entering the Bayou of Plaquemine,

Soon were host in a maze of sluggish and devious waters.

Which like a network of steel, extended in every direction.

Over their heart, the towering and tenebrous boughs of the cypress

Met in a dusly arch, and trailing mosses in midair

Waved like banners that hang on the walls of ancient cathedrals.

Deathlike the schence seemed, and unbroken, save by the herons

Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees returning at sunset,

Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with demoniac laughter.

Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and gleamed on the water,

Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar sustaining the arches,

Down through whose broken vaults it fell as through chinks in a ruin.

Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were all things around them;

And wer their spirits there came a feeling of wonder and sadness,—

Strange forebodings of ill, unseen that cannot be compassed.

As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf of the prairies,

Far in advance are closed the leaves of the shrinking mimosa,

So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad forebodings of evil,

Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke of doom has attained it.

But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a vision, that faintly

Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her on through the moonlight.

It was the thought of her brain that assumed the shape of a phantom.

Through those shadowy isles had Gabriel wandered before her,

And every stroke of the oar now brought him nearer and nearer.

Then in his place, at the prow of the boat, rose one of the oarsmen,

And, as a signal sound, if others like them peradventure,

Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams blew a blast on his bugle.

Wild through the dark colonnades and corridors leafy the blast rang,

- Breaking the seal of silence, and giving tongues to the forest.
- Soundless above them the banners of moss just stirred to the music.
- Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the distance,
- Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches;
- But not a voice replied; no answer came from the darkness;
- And, when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the silence.
- Then Evangeline slept: but the boatmen rowed through the midnight,
- Silen: at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-songs,
- Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers.
- While through the night were heard the mysterious sounds of the desert,
- Far off, indistinct, as of wave or wind in the forest,
- Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim alligator.
  - Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades; and before them
- Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.

- Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight undulations
- Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent in beauty, the lotus
- Lifted her golden crown above the heads of the boatmen.
- Faint was the air with the odorous breath of magnolia blossoms,
- And with the heat of noon; and numberless sylvan islands,
- Fragrant and tnickly embowered with blossoming hedges of roses,
- Near to whose shores they glided along, invited to slumber.
- Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars were suspended.
- Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that grew by the margin,
- Safely their boat was moored; and scattered about on the greensward,
- Tired with their midnight toil, the weary travellers slumbered.
- Over them vast and high extended the cope of a cedar.
- Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet-flower and the grapevine
- Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,
- On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending, descending,

- Were the swift humming-birds, that flitted from blossom to blossom.
- S :ch was the vision Evangeline saw as she slumbered beneath it.
- Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn of an opening heaven
- Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of regions celestial.
  - Nearer, ever nearer, among the numbarless islands.
- Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away o'er the water,
- Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of hunters and trappers.
- Northward its prow was turned, to the land of the bison and beaver.
- At the helm sat a youth, with countenance thoughtful and careworn.
- Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his brow, and a sadness
- Somewhat beyond his years on his face was legibly written.
- Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting, unhappy and restless,
- Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self and of sorrow.
- Swiftly they glided along, close under the lee of the island,

But by the opposite bank, and behind a screen of palmettos,

So that they saw not the boat, where it lay concealed in the willows,

All undisturbed by the dash of their oars, and unseen, were the sleepers,

Angel of God was there none to awaken the slumbering maiden.

Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a cloud on the prairie.

After the sound of their oars on the tholes had died in the distance,

As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke, and the maiden

Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O Father Felician!

Something says in my heart that near me Gabriel wanders.

Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague superstition?

Or has an angel passed, and revealed the truth to my spirit?"

Then, with a blush, she added, "Alas for my credulous fancy!

Unto ears like thine such words as these have no meaning."

But made answer the reverend man, and he smiled as he answered,—

" Daughter, thy words are not idle; nor are they to me without meaning.

Feeling is deep and still; and the word that floats on the surface

Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where the anchor is hidden.

Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the world calls illusions.

Gabriel truly is near thee: for not far away to the southward.

Ca the banks of the Tenhe, are the towns of St, Maur and St. Martin.

There the long-wandering bride shall be given again to her bridegroom.

There the long-absent pastor regain his flock and his sheepfold.

Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and forests of fruit-trees;

Under the feet a gird in of flowers, and the bluest of heavens

Bending above, and resting its dome on the walls of the forest.

They who dwell there have named it the Eden of Louisiana."

With these words of cheer they arose and continued their journey.

Softly the evening came. The sun from the western horizon

Like a magici in extended his golden wand o'er the landscape

Twinkling vapors arose; and sky and water and forest

Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted and mingled together.

Hanging between two skies, a cloud with edges of silver,

Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on the motionless water.

Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible sweetness.

Touched by the magic spell, the sacred fountains of feeling

Glowed with the light of love, as the skies and waters around her.

Then from a neighboring thicket the mockingbird, wildest of singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,

Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,

That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.

Plaintive at first were the tones and sad; then soaring to madness

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.

Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation;

Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision.

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops

Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches.

With such a prelude as this, and hearts that throbbed with emotion,

Slowly they entered the Tèche, where it flows through the green Opelousas,

And, through the amber air, above the crest of woodland.

Saw the column of smoke that arose from a neighboring dwelling;—

Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant lowing of cattle.

## III.

NEAR to the bank of the river, o'ershadowed by oaks, from whose branches

Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic mistletoe flaunted.

Such as the Druids cut down with golden hatchets at Yule-tide.

Stood, secluded and still, the house of the herdsman. A garden

Girded it round about with a belt of luxuriant blossoms,

Filling the air with fragrance. The house itself was of timbers

Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully fitted together.

Large and low was the roof; and on slender columns supported,

Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and spacious veranda,

Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee, extended around it.

At each end of the house, amid the flowers of the garden,

Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's perpetual symbol,

Scenes of endless wooing, and endless contentions of rivals.

Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of shadow and sunshine

Ran near the tops of the trees; but the house itself was in shadow,

And from its chimney-top, ascending and slowly expanding

Into the evening air, a thin blue column of smoke rose.

In the rear of the house, from the garden gate, ran a pathway

Through the great groves of oak to the skirts of the limitless prairie,

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly descending.

Full in his track of light, like ships with shadowy canvas

- Hanging loose from their spars in a motionless calm in the tropics,
- Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cordage of grapevines.
  - Just where the woodlands met the flowery surf of the prairie,
- Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle and stirrups,
- Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet of deerskin.
- Broad and brown was the face that from under the Spanish sombrero
- Gated in the peaceful scene, with the lordly look of its master.
- Round alout him were numberless herds of kine, that were grazing
- Quetly in the meadows, and breathing the vapory freshness
- That uprose from the river, and spread itself over the landscape.
- Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side, and expanding
- Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast, that resounded
- Wildly and sweet and far, through the still damp air of the evening.
- Suddenly out of the grass the long white horns of the cattle

Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents of ocean.

Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing rushed o'er the prairie,

And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade in the distance.

Then, as the herdsman turned to the house, through the gate of the garden

Saw he the forms of the priest and the maiden advancing to meet him.

Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in amazement, and forward

Rushed with extended arms and exclamations of wonder;

When they beheld his face, they recognized Basil the blacksmith.

Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests to the garden.

There in an arbor of roses with endless question and answer

Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed their friendly embraces,

Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting silent and thoughtful.

Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not; and now dark doubts and misgivings

Stole o'er the maiden's heart; and Basil, somewhat embarrassed,

Broke the silence and said, "If you came by the Atchafalaya,

- How have you nowhere encountered my Gabriel's boat on the bayous?"
- Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil a shade passed.
- Tears came into her eyes, and she said, with a tremulous accent,
- "Gone? is Gabriel gone?" and, concealing her face on his shoulder,
- All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and she wept and lamented.
- Then the good Basil said, and his voice grew blithe as he said it, —
- "Be of good cheer, my child; it is only to-day he departed.
- Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my herds and my horses.
- Moody and restless grown, and tried and troubled, his spirit
- Could no longer endure the calm of this quiet existence.
- Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrowful ever,
- Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his troubles,
- He at length had become so tedious to men and to maidens,
- Tedious even to me, that at length I bethought me, and sent him
- Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules with the Spaniards.

Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the Ozark Mountains,

Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers trapping the beaver.

Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow the fugitive lover;

He is not far on his way, and the Fates and the streams are against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the red dew of the morning

We will follow him fast, and bring him back to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from the banks of the river,

Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came Michael the fiddler.

Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a god on Olympus,

Having no other care than dispensing music to mortals.

Far renowned was he for his silver locks and his fiddle.

"Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave Acadian minstrel!"

As they bore him aloft in triumphal procession; and straightway

Father Felician' advanced with Evangeline, greeting the old man

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while Basil, enraptured,

Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions and gossips,

Laughing load and long, and embracing mothers and daughters.

Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the cidevant blacksmith.

All his domains and his herds, and his patriarchal demeanor:

Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the soil and the climate,

And of the prairies, whose numberless herds were his who would take them:

Each one thought in his heart, that he, too, would go and do likewise.

Thus they ascended the steps, and, crossing the breezy veranda,

Entered the hall of the house, where already the supper of Basil

Waited his late return; and they rested and feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness descended.

All was silent without, and, illuming the landscape with silver.

Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad stars; but within doors -

Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends in the glimmering lamplight.

Then from his station aloft, at the head of the table, the herdsman

Poured forth his heart and his wine together in endless profusion.

Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet Natchitoches tobacco.

Thus he spake to his guests, who listened, and smiled as they listened:—

"Welcome once more, my friends, who long have been friendless and homeless.

Welcome once more to a home, that is better perchance than the old one!

Here no hungry winter congeals our blood like the rivers;

Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of the farmer.

Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the soil. as a keel through the water.

All the year round the orange-groves are in blossom; and grass grows

More in a single night than a whole Canadian summer.

Here, too, numberless herds run wild and unclaimed in the prairies;

Here, too, lands may be had for the asking, and forests of timber

With a few blows of the axe are hewn and framed into houses.

After your houses are built, and your fields are yellow with harvests,

No King George of England shall drive you away from your homesteads,

Burning your dwellings and barns, and stealing your farms and your cattle."

Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful cloud from his nostrils.

While his huge, brown hand came thundering down on the table.

So that the guests all started; and Father Felician, astounded,

Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-way to his nostrils.

But the brave Basil resumed, and his words were milder and gayer:—

"Only beware of the fever, my friends, beware of the fever!

For it is not like that of our cold Acadian climate,

Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's neck in a nutshell!"

Then there were voices heard at the door, and footsteps approaching

Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the breezy veranda.

It was the neighboring Creoles and small Acadian planters,

Who had been summoned all to the house of Basil the Herdsman.

- Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades and neighbors:
- Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they who before were as strangers,
- Meeting in exile, became straightway as friends to each other,
- Drawn by the gentle bond of a common country together.
- But in the neighboring hall a strain of music, proceeding
- From the accordant strings of Michael's melodious fiddle,
- Broke up all further speech. Away, like children delighted,
- All things forgotten besides, they gave themselves to the maddening
- Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and swayed to the music,
- Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush of fluttering garments.
  - Meanwhile, apart, at the head of the hall, the priest and the herdsman
- Sat, conversing together of past and present and future;
- While Evangeline stood like one entranced, for within her
- Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst of the music

Heard she the sound of the sea, and an irrepressible sadness

Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole forth into the garden.

Beautiful was the night. Behind the black wall of the forest,

Tipping its summit with silver, arose the moon.

On the river

Fell here and there through the branches a tremulous gleam of the moonlight,

Like the sweet thoughts of love on a darkened and devious spirit.

Nearer and round about her, the manifold flowers of the garden

Poured out their souls in odors, that were their prayers and confessions

Unto the night, as it went its way, like a silen.

Carthusian.

Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy with shadows and night-dews,

Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm and the magical moonlight

Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable longings,

As, through the garden gate, and beneath the shade of the oak-trees,

Passed she along the path to the edge of the measureless prairie.

Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and fire-flies

- Gleaming and floating away in mingled and infinite numbers.
- Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God in the heavens,
- Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to marvel and worship,
- Save when a blazing comet was seen on the walls of that temple,
- As if a hand had appeared and written upon them, "Upharsin."
- And the soul of the maiden, between the stars and the fire-flies.
- Wandered alone, and she cried, "O Gabriel!
  O my beloved!
- Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot be-
- Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice does not reach me?
- Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path to the prairie!
- Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on the woodlands around me!
- Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning from labor.
- Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of me in thy slumbers!
- When shall these eyes behold, these arms be folded about thee?"
- Loud and sudden and near the note of a whip-poorwill sounded

Like a flute in the woods; and anon, through the neighboring thickets,

Farther and farther away it floated and dropped into silence.

"Patience!" whispered the oaks from oracular caverns of darkness:

And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh responded, "To-morrow!"

Bright rose the sun next day; and all the flowers of the garden

Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and anointed his tresses

With the delicious balm that they bore in their vases of crystal.

"Farewell!" said the priest, as he stood at the shadowy threshold;

"See that you bring us the Prodigal Son from his fasting and famine,

And, too, the Foolish Virgin, who slept when the bridegroom was coming."

"Farewell!" answered the maiden, and, smiling, with Basil descended

Down to the river's brink, where the boatmen already were waiting.

Thus beginning their journey with morning, and sunshine, and gladness,

Swiftly they followed the flight of him who was speeding before them,

Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf over the desert.

Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day that succeeded,

Found they trace of his course, in lake or forest or river.

Nor, after many days, had they found him; but vague and uncertain

Rumors alone were their guides through a wild and desolate country;

Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of Adayes,

Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned from the garrulous landlord,

That on the day before, with horses and guides and companions,

Gabriel left the village, and took the road of the prairies.

## IV.

FAR in the West there lies a desert land, where the mountains

Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty and luminous summits.

Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where the gorge, like a gateway,

Opens a passing rude to the wheels of the emigrant's wagon.

- Westward the Oregon flows and the Walleway and Owyhee.
- Eastward, with devious course, among the Windriver Mountains,
- Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate leaps the Nebraska;
- And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout and the Spanish sierras,
- Fretted with sands and rocks, and swept by the wind of the desert,
- Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound, descend to the ocean,
- Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and solemn vibrations.
- Spreading between these streams are the wondrous, beautiful prairies,
- Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow and sunshine.
- Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and purple amorphas.
- Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and the elk and the roebuck;
- Over them wandered the wolves, and herds of riderless horses
- Fires that blast and blight, and winds that are weary with travel;
- Over them wander the scattered tribes of Ishmael's children,
- Staining the desert with blood; and above their terrible war-trails

- Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic, the vulture,
- Like the implacable soul of a chieftain slaughtered in battle,
- By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the heavens.
- Here and there rise smokes from the camps of these savage marauders;
- Here and there rise groves from the margins of swift-running rivers;
- And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite monk of the desert,
- Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for roots by the brook-side,
- And over all is the sky, the clear and crystalline heaven,
- Like the protecting hand of God inverted above them.
- Into this wonderful land, at the base of the Ozark Mountains.
- Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and trappers behind him.
- Day after day, with their Indian guides, the maiden and Basil
- Followed his flying steps, and thought each day to o'ertake him.
- Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw, the smoke of his camp-fire
- Rise in the morning air from the distant plain; but at nightfall,

When they had reached the place, they found only embers and ashes.

And, the third ribert were sail at times and their bodies were weary,

Hope till a tilam on, as the mogic Fata Morgana

Show the first of light that retreated and vanished before them.

On e, the wing their evening fire, there silently entered

Into the hill car just fadim wo an, whose features

Wore a p has of orrow, and patience as great as her sorrow.

She was a Silver wouldn't retinuing home to her people,

From the 10-of lunting-grounds of the crue) Camanches,

When to Can dian he bead, a Cowenides Bois, had been murdered.

Total ed more their beart, at her story, and warmest and friendliest welcome

Gave they, with words of claer, and she sat and feasted among them

On the bouldo-meat and the venison cooked on the embers.

But when their meal was done, and Basil and all his companions,

Worn with the long day's march and the chase of the deer and the bison,

Stretched themselves on the ground, and slept where the quivering fire-light

Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their forms wrapped up in their blankets,

Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she sat and repeated

Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm of her Indian accent,

All the tale of her love, with its pleasures, and pains, and reverses.

Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to know that another

Hapless heart like her own had loved and had been disappointed.

Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and woman's compassion,

Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had suffered was near her,

She in turn related her love and all its disasters. Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and when

she had ended

Still was mute; but at length, as if a mysterious horror

Passed through her brain, she spake, and repeated the tale of the Mowis;

Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won and wedded a maiden,

But, when the morning came, arose and passed from the wigwam,

Fading and melting away and dissolving into the sunshine,

Till she beheld him no more, though she followed far into the forest.

Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed like a weird incantation,

Told she the tale of the fair Lilinau, who was wooed by a phantom,

That, through the pines, o'er her father's lodge, in the hush of the twilight,

Breathed like the evening wind, and whispered love to the maiden,

Till she followed his green and waving plume through the forest,

And nevermore returned, nor was seen again by her people.

Silent with wonder and strange surprise, Evangeline listened

To the soft flow of her magical words, till the region around her

Seemed like enchanted ground, and her swarthy guest the enchantress.

Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains the moon rose,

Lighting the little tent, and with a mysterious splendor

Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing and filling the woodland.

With a delicious sound the brook rushed by, and the branches

Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely audible whispers.

Filled with the thoughts of love was Evangeline's heart, but a secret,

Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite terror.

As the cold, poisonous snake creeps into the nest of the swallow.

It was no earthly fear. A breath from the region of spirits

Seemed to float in the air of night; and she felt for a moment

That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was pursuing a phantom.

With this thought she slept, and the fear and the phantom had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was resumed; and the Shawnee

Said, as they journeyed along, "On the western slope of these mountains

Dwells in his little village the Black Robe chief of the Mission.

Much he teaches the people, and tells them of Mary and Jesus;

Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep with pain, as they hear him."

Then, with a sudden and secret emotion, Evangeline answered,

'Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us!"

Fhither they turned their steeds; and behind a spur of the mountains,

Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices.

And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,

Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission.

Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,

Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children.

A crucifix fastened

High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grapevines,

Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling beneath it.

This was their rural chapel. Aloft, through the intricate arches

Of its acrial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,

Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the branches.

Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers, nearer approaching,

Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the evening devotions,

But when the service was done, and the benediction had fallen

Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed from the hands of the sower,

Slowly the reverend man advanced to the strangers, and bade them

Welcome; and when they replied, he smiled with benignant expression,

Hearing the homelike sounds of his mothertongue in the forest,

And, with words of kindness, conducted them into his wigwam.

There upon mats and skins they reposed, and on cakes of the maize-ear

Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the watergourd of the teacher.

Soon was their story told; and the priest with solemnity answered:—

"Not six suns have risen and set since Gabriel, seated

On this mat by my side, where now the maiden reposes,

Told me this same sad tale; then arose and continued his journey!"

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake with an accent of kindness;

But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in winter the snow-flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds have departed.

- "Far to the north he has gone," continued the priest; "but in autumn,
- When the chase is done, will return again to the Mission."
- Then Evangeline said, and her voice was meek and submissive,
- "Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad and afflicted."
- So seemed it wise and well unto all; and betimes on the morrow,
- Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian guides and companions,
- Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline stayed at the Mission.
  - Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded each other, —
- Days and weeks and months; and the fields of maize that were springing
- Green from the ground when a stranger she came, now waving above her,
- Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves interlacing, and forming
- Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries pillaged by squirrels.
- Then in the golden weather the maize was husked, and the maidens
- Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that betokened a lover,

But at the crooked laughed, and called it a thief in the corn-field.

Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought not her lover.

"Patience!" the priest would say; "have faith, and thy prayer will be answered!

Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head from the meadow,

See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true as the magnet;

This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has planted

Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveller's journey

Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.

Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,

Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance,

But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly.

Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter

Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the winter, — yet Gabriel came not;

- Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes of the robin and bluebird
- Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet Gabriel came not.
- But on the breath of the summer winds a rumor was wafted
- Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor of blossom.
- Far to the north and east, it said, in the Michigan forests,
- Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the Saginaw River.
- And, with returning guides, that sought the lakes of St. Lawrence,
- Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from the Mission.
- When over weary ways, by long and periious marches,
- She had attained at length the depths of the Michigan forests,
- Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and fallen to ruin!
  - Thus did the long sad years glide on, and in seasons and places
- Divers and distant far was seen the wandering maiden; —
- Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek Moravian Missions,

Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields of the army,

Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and populous cities.

Like a phantom she came, and passed away un-

Fair was she and young, when in hope began the long journey;

Faded was she and old, when in disappointment it ended.

Each succeeding year stole something away from her beauty,

Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the gloom and the shadow.

Then there appeared and spread faint streaks of gray o'er her forehead,

Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her earthly horizon,

As in the Eastern sky the first faint streaks of the morning.

## v.

In that delightful land which is washed by the Delaware's waters,

Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn the apostle,

Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream the city he founded.

- There all the air is balm, and the peach is the emblem of beauty,
- And the streets still re-echo the names of the trees of the forest,
- As if they fain would appease the Dryads whose haunts they molested.
- There from the troubled sea had Evangeline landed, an exile,
- Finding among the children of Penn a home and a country.
- There old René Leblanc had died: and when he departed,
- Saw at his side only one of all his hundred descendants.
- Something at least there was in the friendly streets of the city,
- Something that spake to her heart, and made her no longer a stranger;
- And her ear was pleased with the Thee and Thou of the Quakers,
- For it recalled the past, the old Acadian country,
- Where all men were equal, and all were brothers and sisters.
- So, when the fruitless search, the disappointed endeavor,
- Ended, to recommence no more upon earth, uncomplaining,
- Thither, as leaves to the light, were turned her thoughts and her footsteps.

As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of the morning

Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape below us,

Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities and hamlets,

So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw the world far below her,

Dark no longer, but all illumined with love; and the pathway

Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth and fair in the distance.

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her heart was his image,

Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as last she beheld him,

Only more beautiful made by his deathlike silence and absence.

Into her thoughts of him time entered not, for it was not.

Over him years had no power; he was not changed, but transfigured;

He had become to her heart as one who is dead, and not absent;

Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion to others,

This was a lesson a life of trial and sorrow had taught her.

So was her love diffused, but, like to composition odorous spices,

- Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the air with aroma.
- Other hope had she none, nor wish in life, but to follow
- Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet of her Saviour.
- Thus many years she lived as a Sister of Mercy; frequenting
- Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded lanes of the city,
- Where distress and want concealed themselves from the sunlight,
- Where dise use and sorrow in garrets languished neglected.
- Night after night, when the world was asleep, as the watchman repeated
- Loud, through the gusty screets, that all was well in the city,
- High at some lonely window he saw the light of her taper.
- Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as slow through the suburbs
- Plodded the German farmer, with flowers and fruits for the market,
- Met he that meek, pale face, returning home from its watchings.
  - Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell on the city,

Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by flocks of wild pigeons,

Darkening the sun in their flight, with naught in their craws but an acorn.

And, as the tides of the sea arise in the month of September,

Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to a lake in the meadow.

So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its natural margin,

Spread to a brackish lake, the silver stream of existence.

Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to charm, the oppressor;

But all perished alike beneath the scourge of his anger; —

Only, alas! the poor, who had neither friends nor attendants,

Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of the homeless.

Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of meadows and woodlands;—

Now the city surrounds it; but still, with its gateway and wicket

Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble walls seem to echo

Softly the words of the Lord: — "The poor ye always have with you."

Thither, by night and by day, came the Sister of Mercy. The dying

- Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed, to behold there
- Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead with splendor,
- Such as the artist paints o'er the brows of saints and apostles,
- Or such as hangs by night o'er a city seen at a distance.
- Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the city celestial,
- Into whose shining gates erelong their spirits would enter.
  - Thus, on a Sabbath morn, through the streets, deserted and silent,
- Wending her quiet way, she entered the door of the almshouse.
- Sweet on the summer air was the odor of flowers in the garden;
- And she paused on her way to gather the fairest among them,
- That the dying once more might rejoice in their fragrance and beauty.
- Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corridors, cooled by the east wind,
- Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes from the belfry of Christ Church,
- While, intermingled with these, across the meadows were wafted

Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the Swedes in their church at Wicaco.

Soft as descending wings fell the calm of the hour on her spirit;

Something within her said, "At length thy trials are ended;"

And, with light in her looks, she entered the chambers of sickness.

Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, careful attendants,

Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching brow, and in silence

Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and concealing their faces,

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts of snow by the roadside.

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline entered,

Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while she passed, for her presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on the walls of a prison.

And, as she looked around, she saw how Death, the consoler,

Laying his hand upon many a heart, had healed it forever.

Many familiar forms had disappeared in the night-time;

Vacant their places were, or filled already by strangers.

- Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feeling of wonder.
- Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart, while a shudder
- Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the flowerets dropped from her fingers,
- And from her eves and cheeks the light and bloom of the morning.
- Then there escaped from her lips a cry of such terrible anguish,
- That the doing heard it, and started up from their pillows.
- On the pullet before her was stretched the form of an old man.
- Long, and thin, and grav were the locks that shaded his temples;
- But, as he lay in the morning light, his face for a moment
- Seemed to assume once more the forms of its earlier manhood:
- So are wont to be changed the faces of those who are dying.
- Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush of the fever.
- As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had besprinkled its portals,
- That the Angel of Death might see the sign, and pass over.
- Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his spirit exhausted

Seemed to be sinking down through infinite depths in the darkness,

Darkness of slumber and death, forever sinking and sinking.

Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations,

Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded

Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like.

"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.

Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;

Creen Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them,

Village, and mountain, and woodlands: and, walking under their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.

Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eyelids,

Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered

Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongueswould have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline, kneeling beside him,

- Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on her bosom.
- Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it suddenly sank into darkness,
- As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of wind at a casement.
  - All was ended now, the hope, and the fear, and the sorrow,
- All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing.
- All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish of patience!
- And, as she pressed once more the lifeless head to her bosom,
- Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured, "Father, I thank thee!"
  - STILL stands the forest primeval; but far away from its shadow,
- Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.
- Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,
- In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.
- Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,

Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and forever,

Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy,

Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labors.

Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their journey!

Still stands the forest primeval; but under the shade of its branches

Dwells another race, with other customs and language.

Only along the shore of the mournful and misty
Atlantic

Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers from exile

Wandered back to their native land to die in its bosom.

In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom are still busy;

Maidens still wear their Norman caps and their kirtles of homespun,

And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's story,

While from its rocky caverns the deep-voiced, neighboring ocean

Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the forest.



### THE SKELETON IN ARMOR.

[The following ballad was suggested to me while riding on the seashore at Newport. A year or two previous a skeleton had been dug up at Fall River, clad in broken and corroded armor; and the idea occurred to me of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport, generally known hitherto as the Old Wind-Mill, though now claimed by the Danes as a work of their early ancestors. Professor Rafn, in the Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord, for 1838–1839, says:—

"There is no mistaking in this instance the style in which the more ancient stone edifices of the North were constructed, the style which belongs to the Roman or Ante-Gothic architecture, and which, especially after the time of Charlemagne, diffused itself from Italy over the whole of the West and North of Europe, where it continued to predominate until the close of the twelfth century; that style, which some authors have, from one of its most striking characteristics, called the round arch style, the same which

in England is denominated Saxon and sometimes Norman architecture.

"On the ancient structure in Newport there are no ornaments remaining, which might possibly have served to guide us in assigning the probable date of its erection. That no vestige whatever is found on the pointed arch, nor any approximation to it, is indicative of an earlier runer than of a later period. From such chara veristics as remain, however, we can scarcely torm any other inference than one, in which I am persuaded that all, who are familiar with Old-Northern architecture, will concur, THAT THIS BUILDING WAS ERECTED AT A PERIOD DECIDEDLY NOT LATER THAN THE TWELFTH CENTURY. This remark applies, of course, to the original building only, and not to the alterations that it subsequently received; for there are several such alterations in the upper part of the building which cannot be mistaken, and which were most likely occasioned by its being adapted in modern times to various uses; for example, as the substructure of a wind-mill, and latterly as a hay magazine. To the same times may be referred the windows, the fireplace, and the apertures made above the columns. That this building could not have been erected for a windmill, is what an architect will easily discern."

I will not enter into a discussion of the point. It is sufficiently well established for the purpose of a ballad; though doubtless many an honest citizen of Newport, who has passed his days within sight of the Round Tower, will be ready to exclaim with Sancho: "God bless me! did I not warn you to have a care of what you were doing, for that it was nothing but a wind-mill; and nobody could mistake it, but one who had the like in his head." ]

"SPEAK! speak! thou fearful guest! Who, with thy hollow breast Still in rude armor drest. Comest to daunt me! Wrapt not in Eastern balms. But with thy fleshless palms Stretched, as if asking alms. Why dost thou haunt me?"

Then, from those cavernous eyes Pale flashes seemed to rise. As when the Northern skies Gleam in December: And, like the water's flow Under December's snow. Came a dull voice of woe From the heart's chamber.

"I was a Viking old!

My deeds, though manifold,

No Skald in song has told,

No Saga taught thee!

Take heed, that in thy verse

Thou dost the tale rehearse,

Else dread a dead man's curse;

For this I sought thee.

"Far in the Northern land,
By the wild Baltic's strand,
I, with my childish hand,
Tamed the gerfalcon;
And, with my skates fast-bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound,
Trembled to walk on.

"Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
Fled like a shadow;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf's bark,
Until the soaring lark
Sang from the meadow.

"But when I older grew, Joining a corsair's crew,

#### 112 THE SKLLETON IN ARMOR

O'er the dark sea I flew
With the marauders.
Wild was the life we led;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
By our stern orders.

"Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long Winter out;
Often our midnight shout
Set the cocks crowing,
As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendor.

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid, Yielding, yet half afraid, And in the forest's shade Our vows were plighted.

# THE SKELETON IN ARMORII3

Under its loosened vest Fluttered her little breast, Like birds within their nest By the hawk frighted.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand,
Mute did the minstrels stand
To hear my story.

"While the brown ale he quaffed Loud then the champion laughed, And as the wind-gusts waft

The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
Blew the foam lightly,

"She was a Prince's child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
I was discarded!
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew's flight,

## 114 THE SKELETON IN ARMOR

Why did they leave that night Her nest unguarded?

"Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,
Fairest of all was she
Among the Norsemen!
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
With twenty horsemen.

"Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
When the wind failed us;
And with a sudden flaw
Came round the gusty Skaw,
So that our foe we saw
Laugh as he hailed us.

"And as to catch the gale
Round veered the flapping sail,
Death! was the helmsman's hail,
Death without quarter!
Mid-ships with iron keel
Struck we her ribs of steel;
Down her black hulk did reel
Through, the black water!

" As with his wings aslant, Sails the fierce cormorant. Seeking some rocky haunt,

With his prey laden, So toward the open main. Beating to sea again, Through the wild hurricane. Bore I the maiden.

"Three weeks we westward bore. And when the storm was o'er. Cloud-like we saw the shore Stretching to leeward; There for my lady's bower Built I the lofty tower, Which, to this very hour, Stands looking seaward.

"There lived we many years: Time dried the maiden's tears: She had forgot her fears, She was a mother: Death closed her mild blue eyes. Under that tower she lies; Ne'er shall the sun arise On such another!

"Still grew my bosom then, Still as a stagnant fen!

Hateful to me were men,
The sunlight hateful!
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
O, death was grateful!

"Thus, seamed with many scars."
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars
My soul ascended!
There from the flowing bow!
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal! to the Northland! skoal!"
—Thus the tale ended.

THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS.

IT was the schooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;
And the skipper had taken his little daughter,
To bear him company.

<sup>\*</sup>In Scandinavia this is the customare salutation when drinking a health. I have slightly changed the orthography of the word, in order to preserve the correst monutaciation.

# THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS 117

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,

Her cheeks like the dawn of day,

And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,

That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,
With his pipe in his mouth,
And watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke now West, now South.

Then up spake an old Sailòr,

Had sailed the Spanish Main,

I pray thee, put into yonder port,

For I fear a hurricane.

"Last night, the moon had a golden ring, And to-night no moon we see!" The skipper, he blew a whiff from his pipe, And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,
A gale from the Northeast;
The snow fell hissing in the brine,
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain
The vessel in its strength;
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed
Then leaped her cable's length.

#### 118 THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS

'Come hither! come hither! my little daughtèr,

And do not tremble so;

For I can weather the roughest gale
That ever wind did blow."

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat Against the stinging blast;

He cut a rope from a broken spar,
And bound her to the mast.

"O father! I hear the church-bells ring, O say, what may it be?"

"Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast!"

And he steered for the open sea.

"O father! I hear the sound of guns, O say, what may it be?"

'Some ship in distress, that cannot live In such an angry sea!"

"O father! I see a gleaming light,
O say, what may it be?"

But the father answered never a word, A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,
With his face to the skies,
The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow
On his fixed and glassy eyes

# THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS. 119

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed That saved she might be;

And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave, On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,
Through the whistling sleet and snow,
Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept
Towards the reef of Norman's Woe.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea-sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

She struck where the white and fleecy waves

Looked soft as carded wool,

But the cruel rocks, they gored her side Like the horns of an angry bull.

Her rattling shrouds, all sheathed in ice,
With the masts went by the board;
Like a vessel of glass, she strove and sank,
Ho! ho! the breakers roared!

At daybreak, on the bleak sea-beach, A fisherman stood aghast, To see the form of a maiden fair, Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast. The salt tears in her eyes; And he saw her hair, like the brown sea-weed, On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the Hesperus, In the midnight and the snow! Christ save us all from a death like this, On the reef of Norman's Woe!

## THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH.

UNDER a spreading chestnut-tree The village smithy stands; The smith, a mighty man is he, With large and sinewy hands: And the muscles of his brawny arms Are strong as iron bands.

His hair is crisp, and black, and long His face is like the tan:

His brow is wet with honest sweat. He earns whate'er he can. And looks the whole world in the face. For he owes not any man.

Week in, week out, from morn till night, You can hear his bellows blow: You can hear him swing his heavy sledge With measured beat and slow, Like a sexton ringing the village bell. When the evening sun is low.

And children coming home from school Look in at the open door; They love to see the flaming forge, And hear the bellows roar. And catch the burning sparks that fly Like chaff from a threshing-floor.

He goes on Sunday to the church, And sits among his boys; He hears the parson pray and preach, He hears his daughter's voice, Singing in the village choir, And it makes his heart rejoice.

It sounds to him like her mother's voice Singing in Paradise!

He needs must think of her once more,
How in the grave she lies;
And with his hard, rough hand he wipes
A tear out of his eyes.

Toiling, — rejoicing, — sorrowing,
Onward through life he goes;
Each morning sees some task begin,
Each evening sees it close;
Something attempted, something done,
Has earned a night's repose.

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend,
For the lesson thou hast taught!
Thus at the flaming forge of life
Our fortunes must be wrought;
Thus on its sounding anvil shaped
Each burning deed and thought.

#### ENDYMION.

THE rising moon has hid the stars;
Her level rays, like golden bars,
Lie on the landscape green,
With shadows brown between.

And silver white the river gleams.

As if Diana, in her dreams,

Had dropt her silver bow

Upon the meadows low.

On such a tranquil night as this, the woke Endymion with a kiss, When, sleeping in the grove, He dreamed not of her love.

tike Dian's kiss, unasked, unsought, Love gives itself, but is not bought; Nor voice, nor sound betrays Its deep, impassioned gaze.

It comes,— the beautiful, the free,
The crown of all humanity,—
In silence and alone
To seek the elected one.

It lifts the boughs, whose shadows deep Are Life's oblivion, the soul's sleep, And kisses the closed eyes Of him, who slumbering lies.

### 124 IT IS NOT ALWAYS MAY.

O weary hearts! O slumbering eyes!
O drooping souls, whose destinies
Are fraught with fear and pain,
Ye shall be loved again!

No one is so accursed by fate,

No one so utterly desolate,

But some heart, though unknown,

Responds unto his own.

Responds, — as if with unseen wings,
An angel touched its quivering strings;
And whispers, in its song,
"Where hast thou stayed so long?"

#### IT IS NOT ALWAYS MAY.

No hay pájaros en los nidos de antaño.

Spanish Provers

The sun is bright, — the air is clear,
 The darting swallows soar and sing,
 And from the stately elms I hear
 The blue-bird prophesying Spring.

So blue you winding river flows,
It seems an outlet from the sky,
Where waiting till the west wind blows,
The freighted clouds at anchor lie.

All things are new; — the buds, the leaves,
That gild the elm-tree's nodding crest,
And even the nest beneath the eaves; —
There are no birds in last year's nest!

All things rejoice in youth and love, The fulness of their first delight! And learn from the soft heavens above The melting tenderness of night.

Maiden, that read'st this simple rhyme, Enjoy thy youth, it will not stay; Enjoy the fragrance of thy prime, For O! it is not always May!

Enjoy the Spring of Love and Youth,
To some good angel leave the rest;
For Time will teach thee soon the truth,
There are no birds in last year's nest!

#### THE RAINY DAY.

THE day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.

My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past.
But the hopes of youth fal. thick in the blast
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining; Behind the clouds is the sun still shining; Thy fate is the common fate of all, Into each life some rain must fall, Some days must be dark and dreary.

#### GOD'S-ACRE.

I LIKE that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
The burial-ground God's-Acre! It is just;
It consecrates each grave within its walls,
And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.

God's-Acre! Yes, that blessed name imparts
Comfort to those, who in the grave have sown
The seed, that they had garnered in their hearts,
Their bread of life, alas! no more their own.

Into its furrows shall we all be cast,
In the sure faith, that we shall rise again
At the great harvest, when the archangel's blast
Shall winnow, like a fan, the chaff and grain-

Ther shall the good stand in immortal bloom. In the fair gardens of that second birth: And each bright blossom mingle its perfume With that of flowers, which never bloomed on earth.

With thy rude ploughshare, Death, turn up the sod.

And spread the furrow for the seed we sow: This is the field and Acre of our God.

This is the place where human harvests grow!

#### TO THE RIVER CHARLES.

RIVER! that in silence windest Through the meadows, bright and free, Till at length thy rest thou findest In the bosom of the sea!

Four long years of mingled feeling, Half in rest, and half in strife, I have seen thy waters stealing Onward, like the stream of life.

Thou hast taught me, Silent River! Many a lesson, deep and long; Thou hast been a generous giver; I can give thee but a song.

Oft in sadness and in illness,
I have watched thy current glide,
Till the beauty of its stillness
Overflowed me, like a tide.

And in better hours and brighter,
When I saw thy waters gleam,
I have felt my heart beat lighter,
And leap onward with thy stream.

Not for this alone I love thee,

Nor because thy waves of blue

From celestial seas above thee

Take their own celestial hue.

Where you hadowy woodlands hide thee.
And thy waters disappear,
Friends I love have dwelt beside thee,
And have made thy margin dear-

More than this; —thy name reminds me
Of three friends, all true and tried;
And that name, like magic, binds me
Closer, closer to thy side.

Friends my soul with joy remembers!

How like quivering flames they start,
When I fan the living embers

On the hearth-stone of my heart!

#### MAIDENHOOD.

MAIDEN! with the meek, brown eyes, In whose orbs a shadow lies Like the dusk in evening skies!

Thou whose locks outshine the sun. Golden tresses, wreathed in one, As the braided streamlets run!

Standing, with rejustant feet, Where the brook and river meet, Womanhood and childhood fleet!

Gazing, with a timid glance, On the brooklet's swift advance, On the river's broad expanse!

Deep and still, that gliding stream Beautiful to thee must seem, As the river of a dream.

Then why pause with indecision, When bright angels in thy vision Beckon thee to fields Elysian?

Seest thou shadows sailing by, As the dove, with startled eye, Sees the falcon's shadow fly? Hearest thou voices on the shore, That our ears perceive no more, Deafened by the cataract's roar?

O, thou child of many prayers!
Life hath quicksands, — Life hath snares?
Care and age come unawares!

Like the swell of some sweet tune, Morning rises into noon, May glides onward into June.

Childhood is the bough, where slumbered Birds and blossoms many-numbered;—Age, that bough with snows encumbered.

Gather, then, each flower that grows, When the young heart overflows, To embalm that tent of snows.

Bear a lily in thy hand; Gates of brass cannot withstand One touch of that magic wand.

Bear through sorrow, wrong, and ruth. In thy heart the dew of youth,
On thy lips the smile of truth.

O, that dew, like balm, shall steal Into wounds that cannot heal, Even as sleep our eyes doth seal;

And that smile, like sunshine, dart
Into many a sunless heart,
For a smile of God thou art.

#### EXCELSIOR.

The shades of night were falling fast, As through an Alpine village passed A youth, who bore, 'mid snow and ice, A banner with the strange device,

Excelsior!

His brow was sad; his eye beneath Flashed like a falchion from its sheath, And like a silver clarion rung The accents of that unknown tongue, Excelsion!

In happy homes he saw the light
Of household fires gleam warm and bright;
Above, the spectral glaciers shone,
And from his lips escaped a groan,
Excelsion!

"Try not the Pass!" the old man said;
"Dark lowers the tempest overhead,
The roaring torrent is deep and wide!"
And loud that clarion voice replied,

Excelsion!

"O stay," the maiden said, "and rest Thy weary head upon this breast!" A tear stood in his bright blue eye, But still he answered, with a sigh, Excelsior!

"Beware the pine-tree's withered branch!
Beware the awful avalanche!"
This was the peannnt's last Good-night,
A voice replied, far up the height,
Excessor!

At brer & of day, as heavenward
The pious monks of Saint Bernard
Uttered the olf-repeated prayer,
A voice cried through the startled air,
Excelsion!

A traveller, by the faithful hound, Half-buried in the snow was found, Still grasping in his hand of ice That banner with the strange device, Excelsior!

There in the twilight cold and gray, Lifeless, but beautiful, he lay, And from the sky, serene and far, A voice fell, like a falling star, Excelsion!

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#### HYMN TO THE NIGHT.

# 'Ασπασίη, τριλλιστος.

HEARD the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls!

I feit her presence, by its spell of might, Stoop o'er me from above; The calm, majestic presence of the Night, As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cool cisterns of the midnight air

My spirit drank repose;

The fountain of perpetual peace flows there, 
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night! from thee I learn to bear What man has borne before: Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care, And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer!

Descend with broad-winged flight,

The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most
fair,

The best-beloved Night!

# A PSALM OF LIFE.

WHAT THE HEART OF THE YOUNG MAN "AID TO THE PSALMIST.

TELL me not, in mournful numbers,
"Life is but an empty dream!"
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!

And the grave is not its goal;

"Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"

Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow, Is our destined end or way; But to act, that each to-morrow Find us farther than to-day.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!

Let the dead Past bury its dead!

Act, — act in the living Present!

Heart within, and God o'erhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;—

Footprints, that perhaps another, Sailing o'er life's solemn main, A forlorn and shipwrecked brother, Seeing, shall take heart again.

## 136 THE REAPER AND THE FLOWER.

Let us, then, be up and doing, With a heart for any fate; Still achieving, still pursuing, Learn to labor and to wait-

### THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS.

THERE is a Reaper, whose name is Death,
And, with his sickle keen,
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have naught that is fair?" saith he,
"Have naught but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to
me,

I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord has need of these flowerets gay,"
The Reaper said, and smiled;

"Dear tokens of the earth are they, Where he was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light, Transplanted by my care, And saints, upon their garments white, These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain, The flowers she most did love; She knew she should find them all again In the fields of light above.

O. not in cruelty, not in wrath,
The Reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
And took the flowers away.

### THE LIGHT OF STARS.

THE night is come, but not too soon-And sinking silently,
All silently, the little moon
Drops down behind the sky.

There is no light in earth or heave But the cold light of stars;

And the first watch of night is give.

To the red planet Mars.

(s it the tender star of love?The star of love and dreams?O no! from that blue tent above,A hero's armor gleams.

And earnest thoughts within me rise,
When I behold afar,
Suspended in the evening skies,
The shield of that red star.

O star of strength! I see thee stand And smile upon my pain; Thou beckonest with thy mailed hand And I am strong again.

Within my breast there is no light, But the cold light of stars; I give the first watch of the night To the red planet Mars.

The star of the unconquered will,

He rises in my breast,

Serene, and resolute, and still,

And calm, and self-possessed.

And thou, too, whosoe'er thou art.

That readest this brief psalm.
As one by one thy hopes depart.

Be resolute and calm

O fear not in a world like this,
And thou shalt know ere long—
Know how sublime a thing it is
To suffer and be strong.

### FOOTSTEPS OF ANGELS.

When the hours of Day are numbered, And the voices of the Night Wake the better soul, that slumbered, To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted, And, like phantoms grim and tall, Shadows from the fitful firelight Dance upon the parlor wall;

Then the forms of the departed Enter at the open door, The beloved, the true-hearted, Come to visit me once more;

He, the young and strong, who cherished Noble longings for the strife, By the roadside fell and perished, Weary with the march of life! They, the holy ones and weakly, Who'the cross of suffering bore, Folded their pale hands so meekly, Spake with us on earth no more!

And with them the Being Beauteous, Who unto my youth was given, More than all things else to love me. And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep
Comes that messenger divine,
Takes the vacant chair beside me,
Lays her gentle hand in mine

And she sits and gazes at me
With those deep and tender eyes
Like the stars, so still and saint-like
Looking downward from the ski

Uttered not, yet comprehended, Is the spirit's voiceless prager. Soft rebukes, in blessings ended Breathing from her lips of air

O, though oft depressed and lowely.

All my fears are laid aside,

If I but remember only

Such as these have lived and died!

### FLOWERS.

SPAKE full well, in language quaint and olden, One who dwelleth by the castled Rhine, When he called the flowers, so blue and golden. Stars, that in earth's firmament do shine.

Stars they are, wherein we read our history,
As astrologers and seers of eld;
Yet not wrapped about with awful mystery,
Like the burning stars, which they beheld.

Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous, God hath written in those stars above; But not less in the bright flowerets under us Stands the revelation of his love.

Bright and glorious is that revelation,
Written all over this great world of ours;
Making evident our own creation,
In these stars of earth, — these golden flowers.

And the Poet, faithful and far-seeing,
Sees, alike in stars and flowers, a part
Of the self-same, universal being,
Which is throbbing in his brain and heart.

Gorgeous flowerets in the sunlight shining,
Blossoms flaunting in the eye of day,
Tremulous leaves, with soft and silver lining
Buds that open only to decay;

Brilliant hopes, all woven in gorgeous tissues
Flaunting gayly in the golden light;
Large desires, with most uncertain issues,
Tender wishes, blossoming at night!

These in flowers and men are more than seeming Workings are they of the self-same powers, Which the Poet, in no idle dreaming, Seeth in himself and in the flowers.

Everywhere about us are they glowing, Some like stars, to tell us Spring is born; Others, their blue eyes with tears o'erflowing Stand like Ruth amid the golden corn;

Not alone in Spring's armorial bearing, And in Summer's green-emblazoned field, But in arms of brave old Autumn's wearing, In the centre of his brazen shield;

Not alone in meadows and green alleys,
On the mountain-top, and by the brink
Of sequestered pools in woodland valleys,
Where the slaves of Nature stoop to drink,

Not alone in her vast dome of glory,

Not on graves of bird and beast alone,
But in old cathedrals, high and hoary,

On the tombs of heroes, carved in stone;

In the cottage of the rudest peasant,
In ancestral homes, whose crumbling towers
Speaking of the Past unto the Present,
Tell us of the ancient Games of Flowers,

In all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings.
Teaching us, by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

And with childlike, credulous affection
We behold their tender buds expand;
Emblems of our own great resurrection,
Emblems of the bright and better land.

### THE BELEAGUERED CITY.

I HAVE read, in some old marvellous tale,
Some legend strange and vague,
That a midnight host of spectres pale
Releaguered the walls of Prague.

# 144 THE BELEAGUERED CITY

Beside the Moldau's rushing stream, With the wan moon overhead, There stood, as in an awful dream, The army of the dead.

White as a sea-fog, landward bound, The spectral camp was seen, And, with a sorrowful, deep sound, The river flowed between.

No other voice nor sound was there.

No drum, nor sentry's pace;

The mist-like banners clasped the air.

As clouds with clouds embrace.

But, when the old cathedral bell Proclaimed the morning prayer, The white pavilions rose and fell On the alarmed air

Down the broad valley fast and far
The troubled army fled;
Up rose the glorious morning star,
The ghastly host was dead.

I have read, in the marvellous heart of mar That strange and mystic scroll, That an army of phantoms vast and wan Beleaguer the human soul.

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Encamped beside Life's rushing stream. In Fancy's misty light, Gigantic shapes and shadows gleam Portentous through the night.

Upon its midnight battle-ground The spectral camp is seen, And, with a sorrowful, deep sound. Flows the River of Life between.

No other voice nor sound is there, In the army of the grave; No other challenge breaks the air. But the rushing of Life's wave.

And, when the solemn and deep church and Entreats the soul to pray, The midnight phantoms feel the spell, The shadows sweep away.

Down the broad Vale of Tears afar The spectral camp is fled; Faith shineth as a morning star, Our ghastly fears are dead.

# MIDNIGHT MASS FOR THE DYING YEAR.

YES, the Year is growing old,
And his eye is pale and bleared!
Death, with frosty hand and cold,
Plucks the old man by the beard,
Sorely,—sorely!

The leaves are falling, falling,
Solemnly and slow;
"Caw! caw!" the rooks are calling,
It is a sound of woe,
A sound of woe!

Through woods and mountain passes
The winds, like anthems, roll;
They are chanting solemn masses,
Singing: "Pray for this poor soule
Pray, — pray!"

And the hooded clouds, like friars,
Tell their beads in drops of rain,
And patter their doleful prayers;
But their prayers are all in vain.
All in vain!

There he stands in the foul weather,
The foolish, fond Old Year,
Crowned with wild flowers and with heather
Like weak, despised Lear,
A king, — a king!

Then comes the summer-like day,
Bids the old man rejoice!
His joy! his last! O, the old man gray,
Loveth that ever-soft voice,
Gentle and low.

To the crimson woods he saith, —
To the voice gentle and low
Of the soft air, like a daughter's breath, —
"Pray do not mock me so!
Do not laugh at me!"

And now the sweet day is dead;
Cold in his arms it lies;
No stain from its breath is spread
Over the glassy skies,
No mist or stain!

Then, too, the Old Year dieth,
And the forests utter a moan,
Like the voice of one who crieth
In the wilderness alone.

"Vex not his ghost!"

Then comes, with an awful roar, Gathering and sounding on, The storm-wind from Labrador, The wind Euroclydon, The storm-wind!

How!! how!! and from the forest
Sweep the red leaves away!
Would, the sins that thou abhorrest
O Soul! could thus decay,
And be swept away!

For there shall come a mightier blast,
There shall be a darker day;
And the stars, from heaven downcast,
Like red leaves be swept away!
Kyrie, eleyson!
Christe, eleyson!





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